

of interesting information about common plants is given in the unaffected manner of a lady, too sensible to be a pedant, contributing the results of a more than usually extensive reading to a circle of educated friends.

Poets, of various temper and of various countries, are made to confess their worship of Flora; antiquarianism from most diverse sources, with home and outlandish folk-lore, lend a curious interest to these pages,—while ‘useful information’ finds a due place in the polished piece of ‘inlaid-work’ which a refined taste and good sense have united to produce. Quotation with a view to give a specimen of such a work is out of the question, since everything depends upon the skilful and harmonious blending of the subject-matter, drawn from an infinity of sources.

The work is illustrated by twelve very pretty and faithful coloured drawings of British wild-flowers and twenty-four good woodcuts. It is a volume we gladly see added to Mr. Van Voorst’s list, as an addition to the rather small number of meritorious productions which stand between special scientific works and the science-made-easy trash of the cheap-book manufacturers.

*How Plants Grow: a simple Introduction to Structural Botany, with a Popular Flora; or an Arrangement and Description of Common Plants, both Wild and Cultivated.* By ASA GRAY, M.D. New York, Ivison and Finney, 1858.

If Botany is to be taught to the million, there need be no long search for suitable means. Three of our English Professors have written A-B-C books on the subject; and here Prof. Asa Gray performs a corresponding service for our American brethren. This work differs somewhat, and for its purpose favourably, from any of our native books,—being as it were a combination of the plans of Henslow’s or Henfrey’s rudimentary books and Lindley’s School Botany, worked-out, however, in a perfectly original manner. The first Part, treating of structural, and, to some extent, of physiological botany, is very skilfully written, and we think must prove an excellent teaching book. The second Part relates of course to the familiar forms of the North American Flora. Here, as in his other works, Prof. Gray uses the Natural System, with an analytical Key, and is quite independent of the Linnæan System. In some of the more important Orders, such as Cruciferæ and Umbelliferæ, only the genera are given; and in Compositæ, Grasses, and Sedges, not even these,—as being too difficult for beginners. On the other hand, the common plants of the gardens of the United States are described with the native species, being distinguished by proper marks.